

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1356

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PRETORIA 3261

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PDEV, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA:

1. SUMMARY: THE SALISBURY GROUP HAS GIVEN US NO INDICATION
OF WILLINGNESS TO MOVE TOWARDS AN ALL-PARTY MEETING, ALTHOUGH
THE CONCEPT SEEMS TO BE GAINING INCREASING POPULAR SUPPORT
INSIDE RHODESIA. REGIME OFFICIALS ARE PLEASED AND BUOYED BY
THE DECISION TO HOLD A PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION,
PARTY-LIST SYSTEM ELECTION IN EARLY DECEMBER. THEY ARE MOVING
AHEAD SLOWLY WITH THEIR PLANS--CONSTITUTION DRAFTING AND
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MODIFICATION OF DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION BUT MAKING MINIMUM
CONCESSIONS TO AFRICA PRESSURE. REGIME CRITICS CONTEND THE
SETTLEMENT HAS NO RURAL AFRICAN SUPPORT AND IS LOSING SOME OF ITS
URBAN ACCEPTANCE. SITHOLE IS TAKING SHREWD ADVANTAGE OF
WHAT PROGRESS IN RELEASING DETAINEES AND AMENDING
DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION IS BEING MADE. THERE HAS
BEEN ACCEPTANCE AND SUPPORT FOR THE GRAHAM-LOW MODUS OPERANDI.

END SUMMARY.

2. DURING FIRST TWO DAYS OF SALISBURY VISIT, GRAHAM AND LOW HAVE MET WITH A GROUP OF REGIME OFFICIALS (INCLUDING JACK GAYLARD), SITHOLE, LIBERAL WHITE NUF LEADERS, MUGABE'S INTERNAL ZANU PARTY AND THE ZAPU INTERNAL GROUP (CHINAMANO AND CO). I HAVE MET ALONE WITH A NUMBER OF AMERICAN VISITORS TO SALSIBURY. ANOTHER MEETING WITH OFFICIALS IS SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY MORNING AND WITH DEPUTY EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 14. WE WILL MEET MUZOREWA JUNE 8, AND LATER, CHIRAU.

3. INITIAL CONTACTS INDICATE LITTLE DISPOSITION ON THE PART OF SALISBURY GROUP PARTICIPANTS TO MODIFY THEIR RESISTANCE TO AN ALL-PARTY MEETING (APM) ALTHOUGH THERE APPEARS TO BE SOMEWHAT LESS INCLINATION TO REJECT IT OUT OF HAND THAN IN THE PAST.

4. GAYLARD AND HIS FELLOW OFFICIALS (CLAYPOLE AND GEORGE SMITH) CONTENT THAT REAL PROGRESS IS BEING MADE AND SUPPORT FOR THE SETTLEMENT IS BUILDING MOMENTUM. THE PARTY-LIST SYSTEM WILL ENABLE THE REGIME TO HONOR ITS COMMITMENT TO HOLD ELECTIONS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. THE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE IS MAKING PROGRESS (SEPARATE MESSAGE WILL GIVE DETAILS OF PARTY-LIST SYSTEM AND OTHER CONSTITUTIONAL DECISIONS). THE CONSTITUTION WILL PROBABLY BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF JULY
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AND THE REFERENDUM FOR WHITES HELD AT THE END OF AUGUST. OTHER COMMITTEES, THE OFFICIALS INDICATED, WERE WORKING ON REWRITING THE LAND TENURE ACT WHICH IT IS EXPECTED CAN BE COMPLETED IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS AND ARE ATTEMPTING TO REDUCE DISCRIMINATION WHICH EXISTS IN OTHER PIECES OF LEGISLATION. AS THE COMMITTEES GRIND OUT THEIR DECISIONS THE CONCERN TO MAINTAIN WHITE CONFIDENCE WINS OUT OVER AND AGAINST AFRICAN PRESSURES FOR CHANGE (ELECTION PROCEDURES, BILL RIGHTS (LAND PURCHASE), A SENATE, CONSTITUTIONAL PRESIDENT, AMENDMENT OF DISCRIMINATORY LEGISLATION, ETC).

5. CRITICS OF THE REGIME, HOWEVER, INDICATE THAT WHAT SUPPORT THERE WAS FOR THE MARCH 3 SETTLEMENT IS ERODING. ONE AMERICAN VISITOR SAID HE HAS YET TO MEET AN AFRICAN IN THE RURAL AREAS WHO SUPPORTS THE AGREEMENT. NUF LEADERS POINT TO THE NUMBER OF RECENT DEFECTIONS FROM MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE TO MUGABE AND SAY THAT MUZOREWA HAS LOST SUPPORT IN THE TOWNSHIP AREAS FOLLOWING THE HOVE AFFAIR. EVERYONE EXCEPT SITHOLE (INCLUDING REGIME OFFICIALS), RECOGNIZES THAT WHAT IS CALLED THE "CEASEFIRE" (AMNESTY OR SAFE RETURN) IS NOT GOING WELL.

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

FROM LOW

6. SITHOLE APPEARS TO BE GOING ABOUT HIS EFFORTS TO BUILD
SUPPORT IN A CAREFULLY PLANNED WAY. HE CLAIMS CREDIT FOR
THE RELEASE OF DETAINEES WHICH IS THE ONLY VISIBLE CHANGE
IN THE SITUATION SINCE THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WAS
SIGNED ON MARCH 3. NOW HE IS BEGINNING A CAMPAIGN
AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND, PARTICULARLY, FOR AMENDMENT OF
THE LAND TENURE ACT. HE KNOWS THAT WORK IS UNDERWAY
TO REWRITE THE LEGISLATION ABOLISHING AFRICAN TRIBAL TRUST
LAND AND URBAN RACIAL RESTRICTIONS AND PROBABLY HOPES TO
GAIN CREDIT BY PUSHING ON THE OPEN DOOR. IN THE MEANTIME,
MUZOREWA HAS SHOWN LITTLE DIRECTION BUT CONFINES HIMSELF
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TO REFUSAL TO COOPERATE FULLY IN JOINT REGIME PROJECTS. HE HAS FOUND NO ISSUE WHICH HE CAN ESPOUSE AND WIN IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE HIS OWN AUTHORITY AND INDEPENDENCE.

7. FROM A NUMBER OF COMMENTS, IT APPEARS THAT THE ALL-PARTY MEETING IS BECOMING A POLITICAL ISSUE ITSELF. FRUSTRATION AT THE FAILURE OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT TO END THE WAR AND OBTAIN BROAD AGREEMENT IS LEADING BOTH AFRICANS AND WHITES TO TURN TO THE APM AS A SOLUTION IN ITSELF. AN AMERICAN VISITOR SAID THAT MANY OF THE AFRICANS HE TALKED TO WHO FAVOR NEITHER ONE SIDE NOR THE OTHER ARE GIVING STRONG SUPPORT TO THE ALL-PARTY MEETING AS A WAY OUT. MODERATE WHITES ALSO ARE BEGINNING TO CALL FOR SUPPORT OF IT. ONE ZAPU POLITICAL LEADER CLAIMED THAT A MEMBER OF THE MUZOREWA EXECUTIVE HAD TOLD HIM THEY SUPPORT AN ALL-PARTY MEETING AND ARE URGING IT ON THE BISHOP.

8. I MET WITH THE VISITING AFL-CIO DELEGATION WHICH APPEARS TO BE DEVELOPING A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF SITUATION. ALSO TALKED TO UNION CARBIDE VICE PRESIDENT ROLLINS, AN AMERICAN CLERGYMAN, AND EXPECT TO SEE ALLEGHENY LUDLUM AND VICE PRESIDENT ANDREWS THIS AFTERNOON.

9. COMMENT: OUR RECEPTION IN SALISBURY HAS BEEN GOOD. ALL SIDES APPEAR TO APPRECIATE THE LOW-KEY APPROACH WE ARE ADOPTING AND OUR WILLINGNESS TO STAY IN THE AREA CONDUCTING BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP CONVERSATIONS. THERE IS CLEARLY NO INCLINATION ON THE PART OF THE SALISBURY GROUP TO MOVE QUICKLY TO A MEETING. YET, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS APPARENT TO ME THAT PRESSURE ON THEM WILL BUILD AS THEY FOLLOW THE SLOW, DELIBERATE ROUTE THEY HAVE MAPPED OUT FOR THEMSELVES AND AS THE WAR GROWS. OUR CONCERN
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IS TO GET ON WITH DISCUSSIONS OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE ISSUES SO THAT WE CAN START PREPARING THE MEETING AND THE HIGH HOPES WHICH MAY DEVELOP AROUND AN ALL-PARTY MEETING CAN BE FULFILLED. SO FAR NEITHER SIDE HAS AGREED TO TALK TO US ABOUT A POSSIBLE BASIS FOR COMPROMISE. WE HAVE EXPLAINED TO THE SALISBURY GROUP THAT WE UNDERSTAND THE SENSITIVITY OF SUCH DISCUSSIONS AND WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT THEM IN ANY WAY THEY SUGGEST IN ORDER TO PROTECT PRIVACY. THOUGH THEY APPEAR APPRECIATIVE, WE HAVE NOT YET GOTTEN BEYOND THAT.
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